

MINUTES
of the
OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ADVISORY GROUP (OHVAG)
of
ARIZONA STATE PARKS
MEETING OF MAY 4, 2007
CARNEGIE CENTER, 1101 W. WASHINGTON ST.
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Sipes called the meeting to order at 1:02pm. Amy Racki called roll, and advised the Vice-Chair of a quorum.

Committee Members Present:

Mike Sipes, Vice-Chair
Jim Schreiner
Santee McCullen
Pete Pfeifer
Rebecca Antle

Committee Members Absent:

Drew John, Chair
Hank Rogers

Arizona State Parks (ASP) Staff:

Tanna Thornburg, Chief of Planning
Amy Racki, OHV Coordinator
Troy Waskey, OHV Planner
Robert Baldwin, Recreational Trails Grants Coordinator

Other Individuals Present:

Tammy Pike, US Forest Service (USFS)
Bill Gibson, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Bill Dowdle, Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Members and Staff introduced themselves.

C. ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes from the March 30, 2007 meeting.

Vice-Chair Sipes asked for any corrections or changes to the minutes. Hearing none, he declared the minutes approved by unanimous consent.

2. Presentation of FY 2007 Recreational Trails Program (Motorized Portion) (RTP-MP) Grant Applications.

Bob Baldwin noted that on page 23 in the agenda packet began the presentation of the grant applications. He noted that this is the sixth year that ASP, through the RTP-MP of the Federal Highway Administration, has funded grants. As of the March 30, 2007 due date, ASP received two applications, requesting a total of \$363,826 in grant funds. The applications were reviewed for completeness and eligibility and both applications are eligible for this year's grant cycle. The rating team will review the eligibility of criteria and scope items when the grants are rated and OHVAG will be kept apprised when the funding recommendation is made at the August 3 meeting.

The match requirement for this program is 10%, with 5% of the total project cost being from non-Federal sources, usually volunteer time donations, or fund donations. The \$363,826 will be funded from the 2005 and 2006 allocations of the RTP-MP. Note that \$169,248 from the 2005 allocation was used to reimburse the non-motorized side. An earlier reimbursement to the non-motorized side used 2004 allocation dollars. The Greenlee County education project, which was withdrawn without being funded, returned \$8,400 to the 2004 allocation. There will be over \$9,000 rolling over to the 2007 allocation.

The first application is for the Sycamore Creek OHV Access Road Development for the Tonto National Forest (Tonto). The project involves coordination with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to create a new crossing on Hwy 87 at Bush Hwy/Saguaro Lake Turnoff. This allows the Tonto an opportunity to create a new access point to the Sycamore Creek OHV Area. This is a small portion of the total project, because of the \$280,000 grant cap. The site plan on page 27 of the agenda packet shows the scope of the entire project. OHVAG reviewed and discussed the project maps provided with the application. Tammy Pike noted that ADOT will provide the construction from the highway to the cul-de-sac noted on the map. Tammy Pike noted that the cul-de-sac was designed to be "15 tow-vehicles deep" and turn around space for a vehicle the size of an RV with a tow trailer (approximately a 55' radius.) Sandee McCullen asked if the cul-de-sac will be curbed. Tammy Pike responded that she is unsure of the final decision between curbing and rail fencing. Rebecca Antle asked whether the Tonto was able to complete the work necessary for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Tammy Pike replied that the Tonto had been able to "do" the NEPA.

The second application is from the BLM-Kingman Field Office. The project is to complete route inventory of 479 miles of routes within the

Cerbat Mountains and White Hills areas, mapping the areas, as well as to install trails signs at intersections of those routes, and to print 500 access guides to both areas. They are requesting \$85,626. Mike Sipes noted that the project would inventory routes on land owned by both the BLM and ASLD.

3. FY 2008 Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund Budget Recommendation.

Amy Racki said that each year, OHVAG makes a recommendation to the ASP Board for spending the funds allocated to ASP through the Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund. The ASP Board discusses funding and the budget at its July meeting, so OHVAG will discuss their recommendations at this meeting. For FY2008, the OHV Recreation Fund will have available approximately \$1.2 million for motorized projects. If the FY2007 funds are not fully obligated, the remaining money will roll over into the FY2008 funds available, however those funds are on track to be expended.

Ms. Racki noted that the OHVAG had brainstormed on their ideas to expand on what the OHV needs are. The larger themes were 1) maps and 2) education.

The land managers (USFS, BLM, Arizona Game and Fish, ASLD and Maricopa County) also met recently to discuss OHV needs. One major theme of that meeting was on-the-ground staff to conduct maintenance, put maps into the information kiosks, and provide a presence on trails and at trailheads. The OHV Ambassador program was developed to assist in these areas as much as possible. Another theme was the Travel Management Rule, NEPA, and upcoming site stabilization as well as education and planning. The Coconino National Forest looked at upcoming planning for Cinder Hills OHV Area, and they would need staff to develop the plan. Maricopa County would like to build an OHV staging area near Buckeye Hills; they are looking at facilities needs and may possibly need planning assistance.

The OHV program looks to provide funds looking toward user needs, land manager needs, the state trails plan and the statute. There is flexibility in using the funds. Amy Racki said one goal is to provide continuity with the programs begun this year. Those programs include route evaluations, addressing part of the Travel Management Rule plan. Also included is an on-site management presence, in the form of the OHV Ambassador program addressing the need for on-site staff in OHV areas. Also addressed was site stabilization through small projects. The education need is being by addressed the ASLD/NRCD education project, the dealer packet program, and the map distribution project.

Amy Racki asked OHVAG to review the FY 2008 budget plan as presented and discuss the presentation. The level of detail is “big picture” for the pilot projects underway and planned for the future, so the discussion should also be “big picture”.

Mike Sipes asked for clarification on the projects and said that there were three projects listed in the proposed budget: 1) on-site management including small projects, 2) OHV education including the dealer packets, and 3) the route evaluation project. Amy Racki said that there had been discussion as to including the small projects in the on-site management umbrella. Because small projects are naturally a part of on-site management, they were included. It is hoped that people who volunteer to be OHV Ambassadors will be able to make small repairs and maintenance. Mike Sipes said that volunteer training for the Ambassadors should be separated out and made a category of its own. Amy Racki said that on page 35, there was a breakdown of the various on-site management sub-projects.

Sandee McCullen asked whether the discussion was based on current gas-tax fund structure, and not the proposed funding discussed in the OHV Bill now before the legislature. Amy Racki said the discussion revolved around the current structure. Tanna Thornburg noted that OHV Bill would not provide revenue for perhaps a couple of years even if it passed now. ADOT would have to develop a revenue/funding structure, as would Motor Vehicle Department. If the Bill passed soon, it would be possible to begin planning.

There was discussion on the mitigation funds used for trail rehabilitation, if those funds are being used in areas designated to be closed to OHV users with no quid-pro-quo. Tanna Thornburg suggested that OHVAG might consider drafting a policy statement for the program to be approved by the ASP Board. The statement would be that ASP Board supports and provides for motorized management, including maintaining OHV use areas. While everyone recognizes that there are unsuitable areas to be closed, the ASP Board would like to work with partners who work within the big picture to include OHV recreationists. Using OHV Recreation Program funds for projects embracing that big picture would be the preferable approach, maintaining a balance between closures and keeping trails open. (This topic will be added to a future agenda for discussion.)

Amy Racki asked members to discuss the associated costs and accomplishments for the on-site management presence project on page 35 of the agenda packet. She noted that some program implementation and project materials funds this last year went to form partnerships with the land managers within the pilot project areas to distributed maps, program

guides, stickers, etc. ASP also obtained GPS units to use within this pilot program. Within the area of program coordination, there was \$40,000 to fund a volunteer coordinator to work with Troy Waskey to help coordinate land management issues. These funds went to the BLM. This will help relieve some staffing pressure across jurisdictions. However, hiring for this position has been delayed. For FY2008, some of the funds used in the coordination area might be re-delegated to other categories within the on-site management presence project.

Amy Racki asked OHVAG their opinion of using funds to help OHV plan projects such as Cinder Hills mentioned above. Mike Sipes said that the agencies are mandated to plan and manage their lands, and he feels that their funds should be used for that purpose. The funds under discussion should be for OHV use facilities and on-the-ground programs and amenities rather than assisting the land management agencies with planning. Tanna Thornburg asked about the rest of the proposed budget with regards to planning; there are different levels of planning, such as conducting NEPA, getting architectural drawings and so on. The land management partners are under pressure both with loss of staff and funding to plan new OHV areas and amenities. Further discussion on the difference in types of planning and who would be doing the planning followed. The feeling of OHVAG membership was that funding is limited, and providing dollars for management planning will mean there are fewer dollars available for on-the-ground amenities. The expectation that ASP will provide funds for amenities, areas and planning may be unrealistic.

Bob Baldwin asked whether OHVAG would consider reimbursement or credit for planning dollars spent if a facility is developed. Mike Sipes said that such a plan would be worth considering. However, his experience is that once an agency sees a need for planning, there is usually a way to accomplish the plan and blanket funds for planning will not work.

Tammy Pike said that for the coming fiscal year, there was a loss of \$1.7million dollars re: Travel Management Plan dollars across the eleven national forests making up Region Three. Rebecca Antle asked Tammy Pike whether the motorized area was the only place where funding had been cut. Tammy Pike responded that non-motorized trails are deeply affected as well. Rebecca Antle said that perhaps ASP could look at a stricter time limit to complete planning projects as well as a guarantee that the plans would come to fruition.

Sandee McCullen said that she is concerned that once ASP begins to fund planning, where is the line drawn as far as operating expenses and the like which are not funded. Bill Dowdle said that his agency works with a reimbursement model for planning, and it forces them to ensure that the plans come to fruition.

Mike Sipes feels as far as Compliance Officer time, the amount is fairly significant. Tanna Thornburg said that getting buy-in from Maricopa County to the Compliance Officer portion of the overall plan was a major accomplishment in itself. The agreements have been signed and the program itself is just now starting. There are planned meetings with the BLM and USFS to allow law enforcement cross-jurisdiction. Mike Sipes noted that the money from fines should be used to fund officers and again there should be a quid-pro-quo, even though funds go back to the Counties. Any funds ASP provides should be an enhancement only. Amy Racki noted that one return on our investment is that the relationship between OHV Ambassador and law enforcement officers will be established. There are few other ways to have people on the ground since the land management agencies are losing staff. Being able to also provide funds to agencies "outside the fence" is another return on investment. Mike Sipes said that he feels providing \$10,000 to train volunteers and \$100,000 for officer time might be slightly out of balance. Amy Racki said that low volunteer training costs do not reflect the benefit gained from the three-day training sessions. The only substantial cost may be to pay for dirt-bike safety training because it must be conducted by a third-party enterprise. Tanna Thornburg also mentioned that land management agency staff and others are donating their time and expertise. She said that perhaps an estimate of each agency's donation would help make clearer the value of their donations. Troy Waskey said that the recruitment of volunteers would be an ongoing effort throughout September. So far response has been good, both from clubs and unaffiliated users. Mike Sipes asked if volunteer recruitment was targeted to specific types of OHV users. Troy Waskey said that it is. He passed out copies of the volunteer sign-up forms and informational brochures for the members to review. (Copies available.)

Jeff Gursh said that he and a group of volunteers had worked with a program similar to the OHV Ambassadors, and this group produced a report on what sort of contacts they have with the riding public, and other observations.

Sandee McCullen mentioned that the length of the training session should be made abundantly clear to the volunteers so that they understand the time commitment involved. Tammy Pike also noted that the volunteers will be considered unpaid employees of the BLM/USFS and as such will be covered by worker's compensation insurance. Further discussion on OHV Ambassador training followed.

Amy Racki noted that dirt bike safety training programs cost approximately \$250.00 per person. The time commitment expected of the OHV Ambassadors will need to be considered. At the moment, land

management agencies provide the ATV Safety Institute (ASI) training. Sandee McCullen asked about the length of time an ASI training certificate lasts; for the BLM a certificate expires after 3 years, at the USFS they expire after two years.

Amy Racki noted that OHVAG seems to approve of paying for the dirt bike safety training. Rebecca Antle asked if the United Peer Patrol program with United 4-Wheel Drive had been investigated as far as training. Their program is similar to the OHV Ambassadors, and they could be a source of information.

Amy Racki noted that the Program Implementation and Program Materials allocation of \$200,000 could possibly be scaled back. The Volunteer Training and On-Site Travel Reimbursement allocation would include the dirt bike safety training and travel reimbursement at a to-be-decided rate, provided the agencies were willing to reimburse the volunteer for their travel expenses as an OHV Ambassador. The fiscal year for ASP runs from July 1 to June 30, so the Program Equipment allocation must be considered for the next 1.5 years, when it may be necessary to purchase another equipment trailer. Project Materials are allocated at \$375,000 for the small projects effort across jurisdictions. The small projects application form requires some modification, which OHVAG will discuss and provide input for in the near future. One item that may be removed is the enforcement aspect of small projects, which will be folded into the Compliance Officer Time allocation.

Amy Racki also noted that regarding small projects, OHVAG may consider adopting a program similar to the non-motorized trail maintenance program. This move would help decrease the staff pressure being felt across land management agencies. Tanna Thornburg noted that, as always, the contract must go out to bid and be very specific about the work requirements as well as meeting insurance and training requirements. Within the contracts, individual work projects are assigned but no work is guaranteed. The land management agency then provides guidance and supervision of the selected trail crews. Mike Sipes said that he feels the small projects program was quite popular with land management agencies. Tanna Thornburg noted that the land management agencies had specifically requested trail crews be made available under the small projects program. She noted that setting up the trail maintenance program would be time consuming, but it may be feasible. The state sends out a request for proposals, and providers bid for contracts. Further discussion of the bid process followed.

Amy Racki noted that the ASP Board needs to approve the funding, and they will be provided with a less detailed version of the budget allocation presented to OHVAG today.

As for the second project, Route Evaluations, the land management agencies currently provide a minimum of 50% matching funds. The OHV Recreation Fund contributes a maximum of \$15.00 per route mile evaluated. The BLM is fine with this division presently, but some land management agencies are paying a larger amount per route mile. The \$15.00 per mile reimbursement figure should be discussed and perhaps reevaluated. There are approximately 13,333 miles of route to be evaluated this year between the BLM and USFS. Does OHVAG want to continue this project? There are no success metrics available so far, but the agreements have been signed and reimbursement requests will be arriving shortly.

Sandee McCullen asked whether the 13,333 miles would represent a significant portion of the routes to be evaluated statewide. Bill Gibson replied that between the routes being evaluated this year and next, it would total approximately half of the evaluation needed for Arizona BLM lands. Further discussion of route evaluation and route inventory followed. Amy Racki said that the route evaluation project applied only to BLM and USFS at this point. Mike Sipes suggested leaving the program as it is for the coming fiscal year, the group provided consensus.

The third project, OHV Education, includes a number of “parts” such as the dealer information packet program, youth education in various forms, and preparing maps and other information for distribution. Amy Racki said she had held conversations with the BLM regarding the dealer information packet. They are willing to hire a contractor or two on staff to coordinate and train others to handle the training of OHV users at dealerships. This will supplant the Tread Lightly! training and subsume that into the dealer packet. The BLM has \$30,000 currently available, with a portion of those funds going to finish the Tread Lightly! program.

Youth Education funding is at the moment limited to \$30,000 for the NRCDs, and further information is needed. Another \$105,000 has been allocated to map preparation and information distribution. The Outdoor Information Center last year received a \$20,000 “donation” to get up and running. The emphasis on the need for maps is OHV community-wide, however ideas for interim map creation and distribution still need some brainstorming.

Tanna Thornburg asked whether the ASLD had hired an NRCD-liaison. Bill Dowdle said that this person had not been hired. Tanna said that the ASLD has a “quasi-relationship” with the NRCDs, who have an in-school youth education program which ASP has helped fund in the past. The curriculum is good and access through the schools has been established. Tammy Pike has received calls from teachers asking for the program to be

reintroduced, and Mike Sipes has heard from NRCD districts asking for the same. Tanna Thornburg noted that if funds are available to the NRCDs the program might expand.

Rebecca Antle said that the public service announcements used a couple of years ago were effective and she asked whether those could be recreated to run again. Amy Racki said that ASP is collaborating with AGFD to produce a renaissance of the Nature Rules campaign. The cost of that campaign would be a portion of the education fund.

Mike Sipes asked for a motion to approve the budget and forward the recommendation to the ASP Board. Sandee McCullen moved that the Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group recommend that the Arizona State Parks Board approve awarding \$1,200,000 from the Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund to projects summarized on page 34 of the May 4, 2007 Advisory Group Packet. Pete Pfeifer seconded, and the motion carried with no further discussion.

4. Discuss OHV Legislation.

Mike Sipes noted that Bill 2443 had not yet received the third reading. He then introduced Jeff Gursh of the Arizona Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition to speak about the current status of the OHV Legislation. It is hoped that the Bill will be read during the next week. There are currently 12-15 Senators who support the Bill, and 16 are needed to pass the Bill. Most opposition seems to be because some of the Senators consider it a new tax. The structure of the Bill is that any revenue is generated through user fees, so there are no new taxes involved. Some Senators remain on the fence. Other issues require legislators to be educated, especially about the role of OHVAG in administering the funds generated by this Bill. Largely, the Bill is doing well.

Sandee McCullen asked for a discussion of Bill 1552 regarding air quality and dust on another agenda. Sandee McCullen said that several aspects are intended to be part of the Rules attached to the Bill for flexibility in case changes are needed. Rebecca Antle referred to a handout of some sort she has received that seems to have some inconsistent information (copies available). Mike Sipes noted that a "cleaner" version of the Bill will help make things clearer. Further discussion of the air quality laws followed information sheets. Jeff Gursh said that the AGFD and the MVD had published a brochure recently that should contain the most correct current information. This brochure should be made available to all MVD offices.

5. Discuss Integration of OHV Recreation into the State Parks System.

Amy Racki noted that there are OHV Recreation potentials within the parks system. Lost Dutchman State Park is located near Phoenix in the Superstition Mountains and has brought to Amy Racki an unsolicited proposal for including OHV Recreation in that park. Their proposal is to use a small 30-acre parcel as a beginner ATV rider course trail of approximately .75 miles. The parcel consists of decomposed granite and finer sand. The park proposal also includes a parking lot. Some partnership with the BLM would be necessary as there are common boundaries to consider.

This draft proposal came to the OHV team and was brought to the attention of an ASP Executive Staff member, who asked the OHV team to bring the proposal to OHVAG for discussion. Amy Racki also provided maps of the parcel under discussion.

Mike Sipes asked whether a formal recommendation to the ASP Board was required, and Amy Racki replied that it was not. Mike Sipes said that he feels this proposal is well-thought out and a good first step.

Amy Racki pointed out the route to Lost Dutchman State Park and the parcel under consideration on the map. Discussion of the area followed, including the Goldfield Mine Ghost Town, and other well-known landmarks. Amy Racki noted that no conversations outside ASP have occurred regarding this proposal.

Tanna Thornburg said that the area is fairly small as far as accommodating general OHV Recreation, but it would make an excellent training area. It is also a “foot in the door” for OHV Recreation in the State Parks System. She asked OHVAG to provide their ideas.

Rebecca Antle noted that because State Parks require a fee to enter, this addition will generate more revenue for the system. This will increase the number of people who want to use the park. Tanna Thornburg noted that many people want to use the Parks as staging areas to reach other recreation lands.

Sandee McCullen asked if this would be just a training facility. Tanna Thornburg replied that the proposal said that the area would be a beginner user area. Sandee McCullen said that novice/trainee areas are critical. She asked about what sort of training would be conducted. Tanna Thornburg said that those issues remain to be worked out. Mike Sipes says that the emphasis should be on letting Executive Staff know that OHVAG is supportive of the proposal and willing to help work out details as they arise. Mike Sipes said that OHVAG has let the ASP Board know that there

is an emphasis on youth education and training. Sandee McCullen suggested limiting the training to ATV riders. Mike Sipes said that people are more interested in hands-on training over classroom training, and high participation could be counted on. Further discussion on what constitutes an adequate size for a training facility. The consensus was that 30 acres for a youth training facility is not too small.

The consensus of OHVAG is that they are excited by this opportunity and support the proposal. Mike Sipes noted that there are other State Parks containing possible recreation or staging areas, such as Fool Hollow, Lyman Lake and Alamo Lake. Tanna Thornburg asked if there was the possibility of OHV trails within the USFS land nearby that could connect to Fool Hollow. Mike Sipes said that the USFS is working on a transportation corridor trail in the area now. Further discussion of the community benefit of OHV use parks followed. Rebecca Antle suggested that Catalina State Park would be a good possibility.

Amy Racki said that members should supply her with any other thoughts or suggestions as they arise.

D. PRESENTATIONS

1. Trail Partnership - the OHV User Perspective

Jeff Gursh began by saying that in 1999, Arizona Trails Riders (ATR) was asked to help with the inventory of BLM, USFS and ASLD trails on a volunteer basis. From there, ATR formed its first partnerships for grants with land management agencies, with emphasis on small to medium size projects to keep trails open. An MOU between agencies created the Desert Wells and Granite Mountain OHV areas, and the ATR project involved signage and access guides. Then came the realization that each project would require an MOU and partnership agreements.

At that point ATR began seeking partnerships with the OHV business community. Their slogan of "No Trails, No Sales" was effective in getting a grant from the Polaris company, which offers money to responsible clubs nationally. The first big grant from Polaris through ATR was with the Tonto National Forest for trails signs and kiosks. Polaris also donated an ATV to use when doing the trail work. Further grants followed in partnership with the land management agencies.

With the Travel Management Rule, turning the money into on-the-ground projects became difficult except in the Prescott National Forest. ATR wrote small grants through the Motorcycle Industry Council, SVI and others. A partnership with ASP allowed ATR to provide a match to the grants with the use of the SWECO tractor for these grants. He discussed

the documentation necessary to administer the grants and projects. The bottom line is that ATR arranged over \$100,000 in grants for the Prescott National Forest projects.

One of the largest issues in dealing with these projects is staff turnover at the agencies. Priorities change along with the staff. Another project is the cost for materials. Buying in bulk reduces the price of, for example, fiberglass signs, but 1,000 signs may not be necessary for a particular project, so the signs are bought in bulk for the entire set of projects. Jeff Gursh suggested that OHVAG look at this bulk-buying process used by ATR and/or the Arizona Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition (AOHVC) for materials in order to stretch the small-projects dollars.

Tammy Pike noted that Jeff Gursh had gone through the SWECO training in order to be authorized to use the equipment on federal land. Tanna Thornburg noted that beyond the OHVAG members, Jeff Gursh is ASP's only volunteer in OHV matters, and has been for several years.

Jeff Gursh also noted regarding volunteer time, three days of training the OHV Ambassadors is a short period. The SWECO training alone took over six months including the "internship" phase. In looking at agreements, he has found that having specific volunteer agreements does take a good deal of time, but in the long run the time spent is a good investment. He has also been able to leverage some of the OHV Recreation Fund grant money as a match on other grants with a little creative thinking. This has been especially true in multi-use area projects that need to accommodate both equestrians and OHV users by leveraging funds from both motorized and non-motorized grant programs.

Mike Sipes noted that a certain percentage of the grant funds available through ASP must be used for multi-modal trail projects, so this approach is particularly welcome.

Jeff Gursh noted that his segment of the State Trails Conference in Prescott deals with the multi-use area of Alto Pit. Those trails are managed by using a "split trails" management system.

He thanked ASP for all their help with OHV projects.

Sandee McCullen asked about the bid proposals, and whether the AOHVC would be eligible to submit bids. Tanna Thornburg said that as long as they were able to meet the requirements of the proposal and subsequent contracts, they would be eligible. The proposals cover any project that ASP would be funding and details are forthcoming.

2. Update on USFS National OHV Rule Implementation

Tammy Pike noted that the USFS budget for the individual forests came to \$6.7million for FY2008. If the funding for the Tonto National Forest comes through at that level, they will complete all the ranger districts in FY2008, leaving only Payson and Pleasant Valley incomplete. The Forest Plan Revisions are currently being worked on, using the 1982 rules. This results in restricted choices for outside contracting, however the Tonto is still contracting out work under the Travel Management Plan. The Forest Plan Revision work is not being contracted out. There are issues across the board in the USFS with funding and staffing.

3. Update on Travel Management Planning

Bill Gibson noted that the BLM planning process for the Travel Management Plan is two-fold. A land use plan is the first phase and these are the general land-management plans. Bill Gibson has discussed these with OHVAG in the past. A Record Of Decision for the Lake Havasu Field Office (FO) plan will be signed perhaps next week. The Arizona Strip FO plan is out of the protest phase, and there are seven protest letters. Protests can take over six months to resolve. The Yuma FO plan is in a comment phase; the Hassayampa FO is in the same phase. Ironwood National Monument is also in a comment phase. The Lower Sonoran FO draft plan will be out in the fall. Four of those plans have route designations proposed, which is somewhat unusual. Comments are extremely important because of the route designation in that plan.

The next phase is the Travel Management Plan itself, which is where route designations normally occur. The route evaluation scope item from the ASP grants is now coming into play. The Lake Havasu FO has had two public meetings; the Tucson FO has had four; the Hassayampa FO has complete three; Yuma FO will begin meetings in the fall; the Arizona Strip will have meetings in the fall as will the Safford FO. The public meetings have been well attended, with lively participation. The decisions made can be appealed but not protested as the land-use plans are. This affects mainly the route designation decisions. He advises that the OHV Community attend and participate in these public meetings, and to come with an open mind.

Sandee McCullena asked about the status of routes between now and when the formal route designations are made. Bill Gibson replied that everything that is open now remains legal and open. However, in some situations, riders have created new routes around some that were closed previously. He noted that Yuma's inventory took place in 1996 and 1997. In the Long Term Visitor Area (LTVA) near Quartzsite visitors stay for several months, often bringing along ATVs for riding in the area. In a recent survey, the BLM discovered nearly 1100 miles of user-created "linear

features". The FO now needs to confirm whether these are motorized routes, and there are issues to be resolved.

Sandee McCullen noted that the agencies doing the inventories have been limited in the past to using volunteer crews until ASP stepped in to help fund the Enterprise Team to complete the inventory. The entire 1100 miles may not have been user created. However, this has helped to create partnerships between users and the inventory teams, and this is resulting in more accurate information. Rebecca Antle also mentioned that users have increased by 350% in that time period.

E. REPORTS

1. Chair's Report – None.

2. Staff Reports:

a) Update on ASPB Actions

No actions took place since the last OHVAG meeting.

b) Pima Motorsports Park (PMP) Business Plan Status Report

OHVAG had asked last meeting for Amy Racki to discover and present the business plan of PMP. She reports that there does not seem to be a plan at the moment, however the County says that business is going well and they are looking forward to a successful future.

c) Report on OHVs and Air Quality

Amy Racki will arrange for an official of Maricopa County to address this issue at the next OHVAG meeting. Additionally, there are several existing air quality rules in Maricopa County, Pima County and Pinal County that affect OHV users. Maricopa County rule 310.01 affects OHV and land managers and the County is looking to revise the rule. Rule 310.1 is in a public comment phase for revision and may require the land managers to obtain permits for OHV use, particularly if dust complaints occur. The target is development, not the OHV community.

Mike Sipes asked how it is that the County can issue a regulation that affects the federal lands. Tammy Pike said that Rule 310 is based on a federal mandate, and the idea is to work with the County of air quality issues. Discussions are underway, and air quality management may result in some loss of trails. Maricopa County is not currently meeting the federal health standards for clean air and some work is necessary to meet those standards.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) also issued an Executive Order recently (2007-03 Improving Air Quality). On March 30, 2007, the ADEQ was required to write a report on how to improve air quality, which may affect OHVs. This report is done, but is not yet available to the public. This may affect ASLD lessees and recreation.

There is also the Air Quality placeholder bill at the ASLD. The Maricopa Association of Governments has hosted some public meetings to help develop the details of the bill. Further discussion followed.

Sandee McCullen noted that passing the current OHV legislation will help with air quality issues.

F. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

**G. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS, MATTERS OF BOARD
PROCEDURE, REQUESTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

OHV Ambassador program, ATV safety training, dirt bike training, ADEQ presentation, AGFD wilderness area report

H. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

In response to a member request, and following calendar discussion, the date of the meeting is changed to Friday, August 3, 2007, at the Phoenix, ASP Office. At this meeting the grants will be presented to OHVAG for approval and recommendation to the ASP Board.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Mike Sipes declared the meeting adjourned at 3:58pm.